The Good liable to Intellectual Disorders, of the Melancholy Kind, equally *with others.*

A

SERMON

Preached JULY 4th, MDCCLXXIX,

In the DISSENTING-CHAPEL at *WATESFIELD,* Suffolk;

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

Mrs. *CRABB,*

LATE OF THAT TOWN:

WITH A FARTHER ADDRESS TO HER FAMILY,

IN A SUBSEQUENT

LETTER.

By THOMAS HARMER.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE SERMON.

AFTER a long, and very diſtreſſing Affliction, God has been pleaſed to remove from this Church of Chriſt one of our Number, who, after a Life of great *Beneficence* to the Poor, and of ſteady, *unaffected Attention* to the matters of Religion, fell at length under a *paralytic Complaint*, which conſiderably diſordered her, and at laſt, by frequent returns, ſeems to have brought on a *diſturbance of her Intellectua Powers*, and to have occaſioned ſuch a *Depreſſion of Spirits* as was extremely bitter to herſelf, and diſtreſſing to thoſe about her: but after having ſuffered what infinite Wiſdom thought requiſite, ſhe obtained, we truſt, through the Grace of the Lord Jeſus, a Diſmiſſion from every Sorrow*, and is entered into that *Reſt* which is prepared for the *People of God*. The *Nature* however of the Affliction tending to perplex many a Mind, that a Life of Virtue and Religion ſhould be covered, in the laſt Months of it, with ſuch Clouds of Darkneſs; and that this Diſtreſs of Melancholy, this Anxiety, and this Wearineſs of Life,

* She died *June* 22.

ſhould continue to the End of her Abode among us: I do not think I can give a more advantageous Direction to your Meditations on this ſolemn Occaſion, than by diſcourſing on this *Subject*, making Uſe of thoſe Words of *JOB*, which have been *recommended* to me for the Service of this Day,

Chap. iii. Verſes, 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore is Light given to him that is in Miſery, *and Life unto* the bitter in Soul?— *Which* long for Death, but it cometh not, *and dig for it more than for hid Treaſures?— Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the Grave?*

"IT is better," ſays a Royal Writer*, "to go to the "Houſe of Mourning, than to go to the Houſe of "Feaſting: for that is the End of all Men, and the liv-"ing will lay it to Heart.——The Heart of the Wiſe is "in the Houſe of Mourning; but the Heart of Fools is "in the Houſe of Mirth." And without doubt many a ſanctifying emotion has been excited in the Houſe of Mourning, many a *deep* Impreſſion made on the Soul—ariſing from the remembrance of our own Frailty, the awfulneſs of our own approaching Diſſolution, and thoſe Scenes, which, tho' inviſible now, are expected to open upon us ſhortly in Death; but when the Beneficent and Serious are overwhelmed with the *bitterneſs of Melancholy* in their laſt Months of Life, when they feel an Anguiſh that appears almoſt inſupportable, when every thing thro' the Power of Diſeaſe becomes painful, and even the company of their deareſt

* Eccleſ. vii. 2, 4.

deareſt friends and relations diſtreſſing: our meditations *in the houſe of mourning* may become very perplexing—Are theſe then the rewards of Virtue and Religion? Are theſe the precious effects of a Life of Serioufneſs? Vain, it muſt be allowed, are the *Pleaſures of Senſe*; and incapable the *Laughter of the Houſe of Mirth* to make the Soul bleſſed: but what doth religion effect? We have here ſeen it unable to chear the ſoul.

Man, it ſeems, *is born to trouble, as the ſparks fly upward**: he has the ſeeds not only of Death, but overwhelming Melancholy planted in his conſtitution; and as the firſt certainly will operate, none can be aſſured he ſhall be exempted from the ſecond. How ſad the ſituation of the ſoul that can find no refuge from Anguiſh, but amidſt the Solitude, the Putrefaction, the Darkneſs of the Grave!

Such was the caſe of *Job*; ſuch was the caſe of our lately departed Friend, whom we this day mourn: Who, it ſeems, frequently referred to the words of the Text, as finding a reſemblance in them to her own Sorrows.

Dropping all attempts to illuſtrate the expreſſions uſed here by *Job*, and the recital, in this place, of his afflictions, to which theſe words refer, I would haſten at once to the point I have in view, which is to conſider *The Liableneſs of the Good to feel, as well as others, great depreſſion of the Animal Spirits at certain times*; *and* even to die *amidſt all the Confuſion and Diſtreſs that a Diſarrangement of their Intellectual Powers, of the melancholy kind, may occaſion*: *together with the relieving conſiderations that may ſupport ſurvivors under ſuch a diſpenſation of Providence.*

To effect this, in the ſhorteſt manner in my power, conſiſtent with that *diſtinctneſs* which is requiſite, I would conſider in the

Firſt place, The *different Cauſes* of that longing for the Grave the text expreſſes.

Secondly, I would take notice of that *Jealouſy*, that naturally riſes in the minds of thoſe that find themſelves in ſuch

* Job v. 7.

ſuch a trying ſituation, and the perplexity it may occaſion in the thoughts of By-ſtanders.

Thirdly, The *Groundleſſneſs* of ſuch jealous apprehenſions.——Melancholy in its moſt bitter impreſſions is certainly common to the Good and the Bad. It may then be agreeable in the

Fourth place, To ſet ourſelves to collect What may be the holy intentions of God in thus afflicting Good People; with which may be united, An obſerving the Mercies that may be mingled with theſe great Bitterneſſes.

The Counſels of God are a great Deep, nor are we to be ſuppoſed capable of perfectly fathoming them, but we may gather enough, from the intimations of his Word, to ſilence every *murmur*, and even to ſpread a *gracious Calm* over the ſoul.

O that when we ſhall reſpectively come to walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, we may feel the *chearing Preſence* of God with us! And if not, that, laying ourſelves at his Feet, we may patiently bear the Sorrows he allots us, till the Conſolations of the world of Glory ſuperſede *at once* the Tears and the Anguiſh of Mortality!

I. Let us conſider the *different Cauſes* of that Wearineſs of Life, and of that Earneſt Deſire of the Grave, which the text expreſſes.

They are of two kinds: The Preſſure of *outward Sorrows*; and *Impreſſions*, of a diſtreſſing kind, made *immediately* on the Mind.

1. The Preſſure of *External* Sorrows.

Such was, you know, the caſe of *Job*. His Loſſes were all *moſt complete* in their kind. Not merely a conſiderable portion of his great Riches taken from him, but the whole‡; *diſtant* Clans concurred in diſtreſſing him, and made

‡ Job i. 14, 15, 17.

made the recovery of his cattle *hopeleſs* §; the *Fire of God*, (Lightning,) conſumed what the Rapaciouſneſs of men had left ‖,—and O! how bitter to have the immediate hand of Heaven concerned in bringing him into the Depths of Poverty—him who had been the *richeſt man* of the Eaſt! He loſt not only All his Wealth, but *All his Children*, ten in number, by one ſtroke, and in the Flower of their Age. He felt not only the Loſs of his Subſtance, and of his Children, but of his *Health*—a ſevere and loathſome Diſeaſe ſeized upon him at the ſame time that he was reduced to Poverty—"he took him a *potſherd* to ſcrape himſelf "withal; and he ſat down among the Aſhes†." All this heightened by the Taunts of his neareſt Relation, inſtead of the ſoothing words of *devout Compaſſion**. What a Complication of Diſtreſs! How complete the Deſolation that came upon him! Is it any wonder, that though celebrated for his Patience, he wiſhed for the Grave?

2*dly*. If ſevere outward Diſtreſs muſt be hard to bear, it muſt be *at leaſt* as hard, patiently to endure the Agony reſulting from a Diſarrangement of the Intellectual Powers, when of the gloomy kind.

"The Spirit of a Man," ſays Solomon, "will ſuſtain "his Infirmity; but a *Wounded* Spirit who can bear ++?" If the afflicting hand of God fills the Soul with dark and diſmal Ideas; if he pours Bitterneſs into the heart inſtead of the aſſuaging Balm of divine Conſolation; if the Imagination is diſturbed: what can give Comfort? "Truly "the *Light is ſweet*," it is ſaid, "and a pleaſant thing it "is for the Eyes to behold the Sun‡;" but in ſuch a condition, the Soul much rather chooſes the *Darkneſs* of the Grave. Pleaſant are the *Tenderneſſes of kindred and Friendſhip*; but, in ſuch a ſituation, the company of thoſe we love

§ The *Sabeans* are expreſsly deſcribed as a People *afar off*, Joel iii. 8; and the *Chaldeans* were by no means near them, or near the Land of *Uz*, which ſeems to have been near, if not a part of the land of *Edom*, Lam. iv. 21, conſequently not far from *Judea*.

‖ Job i. 16. † chap. ii. 7, 8. * v. 9. 10.
++ Prov. xviii. 14. ‡ Eccleſ. xi. 7.

love becomes diſpleaſing, we rather chooſe to bury ourſelves in Solitude, and Overtures of kindneſs become as diſtreſſing as Injuries that are offered to thoſe in health. Pleaſurable is Reading of the Devotional kind, Meditation is ſweet, and Prayer extremely ſupporting to a ſerious Perſon in an undiſturbed ſtate of mind; but ſocial Prayer, but thinking on religious matters, but Reading, become diſtreſsful inſtead of conſolatory, to one whoſe mind is diſordered by Melancholy. Is it any wonder that ſuch are longing for the Grave, where they hope that *not only the wicked ſhall ceaſe from troubling; but thoſe that are weary too, weary of their own gloomy thoughts and views of things, ſhall be at reſt*§.

Job ſeems not to have been *altogether* a Stranger to theſe feelings of *inward* diſtreſs; though his ſorrows were chiefly from without: That complaint of the viith chapter, ver. 14, 15, ſeems to prove this, "Thou ſcareſt me with "*Dreams*, and terrifieſt me through *Viſions*; ſo that my "ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling and death rather than life." But whatever may be thought of the *circumſtances of Job*, it would have been inexcuſable in a diſcourſe on the preſent occaſion, to have forgotten the diſtreſs of theſe inward agitations of Soul, when enumerating the ſeveral general cauſes that induce men to *long for the grave*.—The Violence of Outward Sorrow hath made many an one long for the calm retreats of Death; the oppreſſiveneſs of Inward Melancholy, when outward affairs are far from being in an unproſperous ſtate, is not leſs overwhelming: what is worſe, in both caſes our Sorrows are frequently embittered with a Jealouſy which I am now to take notice of, under a

II. Head of Diſcourſe:—The *Jealouſy* that they are the Effects of Divine Diſpleaſure, and the Tokens of an Angry God.

The Soul, under the preſſure of Affliction, is frequently diſpoſed to complain, not ſimply of its Sorrows, but of ap-

§ Job iii. 17.

apprehenſions of the Divine Diſpleaſure; and the Indiſcretion, ſometimes, of By-ſtanders confirms the Jealouſy. I am not to ſuppoſe you ſuch ſtrangers to the book of Job, as not to know that his Friends, inſtead of comforting him, envenomed his Affliction, by repreſenting it as the effect of the high diſpleaſure of God againſt him. Your time will not allow me to cite particulars ‖: you muſt recollect, many of their various ſpeeches of this kind, ſince it was the great ſubject of debate between Job and them, and what made him cry out, with an Emphaſis of Anguiſh, "Miſerable Comforters are ye All!" Job xvi. 2.

If a Jealouſy of this kind frequently attends Loſſes and External Calamities, which is ſtrongly marked out in this book of *Job*, the Jealouſy may well be ſuppoſed not to be leſs, in caſes in which the Mind is diſturbed with the impreſſions of Melancholy, and every thing appears gloomy to the Soul, though thoſe about the perſon cannot ſee any cauſe for ſuch anxiety: they can ſee nothing diſmal; the afflicted nothing but what is ſo. In ſuch circumſtances a perſon of a Religious turn naturally complains of the withdrawment of the Spirit of Peace and Conſolation, that God has taken away the Joy of his Salvation, and poured into the Heart that Bitterneſs its Sins have deſerved. The Soul in ſuch a ſtate is ready to cry out, God is angry with me; and that hand of Correction that never made any miſtake in adminiſtering Chaſtiſement, has pointed me out as *Wicked:* How ſhall I bear his Diſpleaſure!

And what a *Confirmation* of this Jealouſy, may the Soul *poſſibly* derive, from the deſcription that is given us of the impreſſions of Melancholy on the Mind of *Saul!* "The "Spirit of the Lord *departed* from *Saul*," ſays the ſacred Hiſtorian, "and an Evil Spirit *from the Lord* troubled (or terrified) him*." The Spirit of God, the Spirit

‖ The Reader, that wants to aſcertain this point, may conſult the words of *Eliphaz*, ch. iv. 7, 8, 9, &c; of *Bildad*, ch. viii. 3—6,—13, 14, 20; and of *Zophar*, ch. xi. 14,—20. * 1 Sam. xvi. 14.

of Vigour, of Fortitude, of Courage, which qualified him to adminiſter the affairs of Government in Iſrael; the Spirit of Chearfulneſs and Joy, which ſuited a Royal Palace; departed: and an Evil Spirit troubled him, and rendered him *unactive and gloomy*. This Change in *Saul*, his ſervants, as well as the hiſtorian, aſcribed to an Evil Spirit; and the hand of God is ſuppoſed by both to have had a concern in it. This account of *Saul* may add to the Jealouſy and Pain.

The *Continuance* of this Gloom to the Cloſe of Life may alſo augment the apprehenſion. St. *Peter* recommends to Chriſtians a life of Virtue, and a Progreſs in Sanctification, as a *means of miniſtring an abundant Entrance into the Everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt* †: But is a continuance of Melancholy and Apprehenſion to the laſt hours of life an *abundant Entrance* into the heavenly Kingdom? The words may, undoubtedly, be applied to Chriſtians that have died triumphing in Jeſus: who have been able to ſay, with St. *Paul*, *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day**; and again, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day*. Here is an *abundant Entrance* into the Everlaſting Kingdom; but can this term be applied to thoſe *who ſpent the months preceding their diſſolution in Grief, and in Sighing* §? Are the Conſolations of the Book of God not to be depended on? or is a melancholy Diſarrangement of the Intellectual Faculties, which continues unto Death, the ſure mark of Excluſion from the World of Glory? By no means:—For *groundleſs* in the

III. *place*, Moſt certainly, are ſuch Surmiſes.

Job ſeems to have felt, as I have already obſerved, ſomething of a diſordered Imagination; but if he did, *the Lord*

† 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. * 2 Tim. i. 12. § Pſ. xxxi. 10.

Lord turned the captivity of Job ||, and his latter end was full of comfort: *Ye have heard*, says St. *James*, *of the Patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.* But, in the case of our departed Friend, the Gloominess continued, more or less, unto death: Is this characteristic of a bad person? Is it incompatible with being a Disciple of the Lord Jesus whom he will accept? Certainly not. The impressions of disease carried so far as quite to disturb the Understanding, bitter and hard to bear as the affliction may be, is to be considered as a thing *common to Good and Bad* people; and the Continuance of such disorders unto death is to be understood to be the same. Yes, there is nothing *discriminating* in these sufferings: nothing but what bad men may feel, and good men equally undergo; they ought therefore to disturb nobody, neither the Sufferer, Relations and Friends, or unconcerned Spectators. This will appear, with sufficient evidence, if we consider the *general assertions* of Scripture, or call to mind some *instances of former times.*

1st. General Assertions of Scripture.

There is a specific difference between the characters of *Virtuous and Bad* Men: and that distinction shall be marked out by the noblest Consolations on the one hand; and most awful impressions of Agony on the other; but this is to be hereafter. Infinite Wisdom doth not think it proper, in common, to make the distinction very visible now. A plain declaration of the wisest of mere men may be adduced here, and claims our attention, when we are considering this point: it determine it with great Energy. "No man knoweth either Lo[illegible]r Hatred, by All "that is before him. *All things* come alike to All, there is "one event to the Righteous and to the Wicked; to the "Good and to the Clean, and to the Unclean; to him "that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is "the Good, so is the Sinner; and he that sweareth, as he "that feareth an oath." Eccles. ix. 1, 2.

|| Job xlii. 10.

Here is a positive assertion, that All things *come alike* to All——It doth not indeed mean that All things come alike to All *hereafter*: for infinite Joy, and infinite Sorrow, shall be the opposite portions of the Virtuous and the Wicked——It doth not mean that they come alike to All with respect to the *secret views* of God, and the *consequences* that follow things of the same general nature: *All things work together for Good to them* that love God, *to them who are called according to his purpose* *; not then to All indiscriminately: not always to those who do not love God.——Nor doth the declaration mean, that God *never* marks out here the Evil of Sin, by some remarkably severe dispensation of Providence; never, on the contrary, how acceptable Goodness is to him, by some special interposition in favour of Good People: for *Bloody and Deceitful men*, it is said in Scripture, *shall not live out half their days* §; on the other hand, long Life is promised to those that from the heart keep the Commandments of the *inspired* teachers of Religion, *Keep my Commandments*, says Solomon, *for length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee* ‡. So St. *Paul*, in the New Testament, tells us, that *Godliness is profitable unto all things*, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and *of that which is to come*. Of these sensible expressions of approbation and displeasure the Scriptures frequently speak, more especially the Old Testament; and *Solomon* himself in the book of Proverbs, which I just now cited. He cannot then mean any of these, but what he means is evidently this, that in *many* cases, *very frequently*, perhaps *most commonly*, there is no telling *Love or Hatred by the things that happen*, and that there is *no Event whatever*, that falls out in the common course of things, but may happen, and frequently will happen, *alike to both*.

And if this was the case in the times of the Old Testament, as *Solomon* assures us in this latter writing of his, entitled

* Rom. viii. 28. § Ps. lv. 23.
‡ Prov. iii. 1, 2. † 1 Tim. iv. 8.

entitled *Eccleſiaſtes*, after having made long and accurate obſervations on what paſſed in the world; we may well think it ſo under the New Teſtament, where we are more explicitly taught to look forward to Futurity, to ſee the diſtinction and ſeparation made between the Good and the Wicked, between the Men of Morality and the Impure, between thoſe that are Aſſiduous in attending the Solemnities of Divine Worſhip and them that neglect it: for *we Chriſtians are to walk by Faith, not by Sight*‖.

Accordingly a Good Man may be bereaved of All his Children, or, in the lively language of the Eaſt, written *Childleſs*, as well as a Bad Man †; he may have his Property—his Houſe, or his *Cattle*, conſumed by Lightning, as *Job* had*, as well as the idolatrous Egyptians, who ſeverely oppreſſed Iſrael, and in ſo doing broke the ſacred engagements of Hoſpitality and Gratitude ‡; he may die in the midſt of his days, as well as the man of Blood, and by the hand of Violence too §; and therefore, anſwerable to theſe other exemplifications that things *come alike to All*, the Good Man, in like manner, may have his Soul diſturbed and perplexed with all the bitterneſs of a perfect Diſtraction, of the melancholy and gloomy kind, and conſequently with the *ſlighter* degrees of it, as well as *Saul*, who was rejected of God from being king over Iſrael.

It makes no difference here, that the impreſſions of Melancholy ſeem to be aſcribed in the caſe of *Saul* to an *Evil Spirit*. Their agency was ſuppoſed by the Jews in other diſorders, and thoſe in which we have not ſo much as any diſtant

‖ 2 Cor. v. 7.

† So was *Job*, *when* his Friends ſo ſeverely taxed him with being ſecretly a bad man, Job i. 18, 19; which Calamity was afterwards denounced againſt *Jehoiachin*, or *Jeconiah*, 1 Chron. iii. 16, the Son of a wicked king of Judah, Jer. xxii. 30.

* Job i. 16. ‡ Pſ. lxxviii. 48.

§ So died *Joſiah*, that Religious and Zealous Young Prince, who was ſlain by the King of Egypt, in the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of his age.

diſtant apprehenſion of that kind ‖. But ſuppoſing a peculiar Agency of Evil Spirits in Maladies of ſuch a kind as *Saul*'s, yet we know in this reſpect things come alike to All: the *Meſſenger of Satan* buffetted *Saul* of Tarſus*, that veſſel choſen of Chriſt, to bear his name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Iſrael †; as well as *Saul* the ſon of *Kiſh*, who died for his Tranſgreſſion which he committed againſt the Lord §.

There is then oftentimes no perceivable difference made between a virtuous and an immoral character, as to the allotments of Providence, in the diſtributions of bitterneſs and pleaſure in this world. All taſte ſomething of comfort; all partake of pain, and, as to outward views, of the ſame ſorts of pain. All find this world a Vale of Tears, and they may alike live, and alike die, in perplexity and anguiſh; the moment of death makes the diſtinction, and then it appears to be *deciſive and immenſe*. As to this preſent ſtate, things happen alike to All, according to this paſſage in the 9th of Eccleſiaſtes; and it is confirmed, as to the impreſſions of Melancholy, in the

Second place, By direct and appropriate *Inſtances* in the book of God. Inſtances may be produced, not only as to other painful diſpenſations of Providence; but with reſpect to the Anguiſh of Melancholy in particular.

The Bitterneſs of *Job*'s Soul ſprung originally, without doubt, from the Calamities of life, but I have before ſhewn that there was ſomething more——he complains of *being ſcared with Dreams, and terrified with Viſions, ſo that his ſoul choſe ſtrangling rather than life* ‡, of a diſturbed Imagination then, as well as of heavy and oppreſſive outward afflictions. It is true, he ſtruggled with this depreſſion of Spirits, aggravated

‖ *Ought not this woman*, ſaid our Lord, concerning a perſon who through infirmity could not raiſe herſelf up ſtraight, but had long been crooked, *Ought not this woman*, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo theſe eighteen years, be looſed from this bond on the Sabbath-day? Luke xiii. 16.

* 2 Cor. xii. 7. † Acts ix. 15.

§ 1 Chron. x. 13. ‡ Job vii. 13, 14, 15.

gravated by the Unkindneſs of his friends, and ſaid, in oppoſition to their Accuſations, *Till he died he would not remove his Integrity from him*, (his Hope derived from a Conſciouſneſs of his Integrity,) that *his Righteouſneſs he would hold faſt, and not let it go* †; it is true alſo that the Cloud blew over, and his latter end was Joyful. However, Melancholy may aſſail a Good Man, we find by him, and his *Sleep and Imagination may be diſturbed.*

Heman, not only ſpeaks of Anguiſh of Soul, but of his *being diſtracted by the Terrors of the Lord*, in the 88th Pſalm. His language expreſſes not only the bitterneſs of a Diſeaſe, which ſecluded him from the company of his friends, and made him an Abomination to them, in which Solitude his mind might be inclined to gloomineſs; but he ſpeaks of *long continued, habitual Agony*, and of *being overwhelmed with Terror*, ſaying, after a piteous bemoaning his ſtate, "Lord, why *caſteſt thou off* my Soul? Why hideſt thou thy Face from me? I am *afflicted and ready to die*, from my youth up, *while I ſuffer thy Terrors I am diſtracted**. But peaceful and full of hope poſſibly might his end be, though much of life was ſpent in an habitual agonizing gloom: *poſſibly* it might, though we do not know that ſo it was, for we are unacquainted with the circumſtances of his Exit, and conſequently have no *right* to aſſume ſuch a ſuppoſition.

However, if it were ſo, there is an inſtance that is deciſive, and beyond all exception—the Suffering Redeemer. You know what a ſuſpenſion of the Conſolations of God attended him *in the cloſe of life*; you know the Anguiſh of his mind, and the vehement Agonies he paſſed through before the hands of his Murderers were laid on him, and outward violence took place: "He took with him," ſays St. *Matthew*, ſpeaking of his having retired into Gethſemané, "*Peter*, and the two ſons of *Zebedee*, and began to "be ſorrowful, and very heavy. Then ſaith he unto "them, My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, *even unto* "*death.*"

† Job xxvii. 5, 6. * Pſ. lxxxviii. 14, 15.

" *death*‖." According to St. *Luke*, in his Goſpel, his Agony was ſo great as to occaſion a *ſurprizing Sweat*: " Being in an Agony, he prayed more earneſtly: and his " Sweat was as it were great Drops of Blood falling down " to the ground*." And this notwithſtanding the *viſible preſence*, and the *comfortings* of an Angel‡. Nor did, it ſhould ſeem, this diſtreſs ſoon terminate, or even ceaſe when the Meſſengers of Death ſeized upon him, and outward violence began, for on the Croſs he cried in the language of that country, " *Eli, Eli, lama ſabachthani*, that " is to ſay, My God, my God, why haſt thou *forſaken* " me §?" The ſufferings of the Son of God were inward then as well as outward, and they were extremely bitter: he *was ſorrowful even unto death*. This was the cloſe of his abode on earth, after a life of great beneficence and zeal for God, and the anguiſh, it ſeems, remained until he expired: for juſt after that bitter cry, *Why haſt thou forſaken me?* which was about ſix hours after his being nailed to the Croſs†, *he cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up the Ghoſt*‖‖. The writer of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews* indeed ſaith, that Chriſt *in the days of his fleſh, when he had offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to ſave him from death*, was heard, *in that he feared*, or as it is tranſlated in the margin, *for his Piety*, Heb. v. 7. But how heard? he was heard ſo far as not to ſink under the violence of the Anguiſh, but not ſo as to be delivered from Death moſt certainly, for if Chriſt *died not, our faith is vain, we are yet in our ſins*; and not ſo heard as to be delivered from the inward, diſtreſsful, agonizing impreſſions of grief on his ſoul, as is evident from the apoſtolic hiſtories of his Paſſion, and by which his death is remarkably diſtinguiſhed from that of many of his Martyrs, particularly from what St. *Paul expected* ſhould attend his dying for the Good of the Church**, and

‖ Mat. xxvi. 37, 38. * Luke xxii. 44. ‡ ver. 43.
§ Matt. xxvii. 46. † Mark xv. 34, compared with v. 25.
‖‖ Matt. xxvii. 50. ** Acts xx. 24, Phil. ii. 17.

and what he *actually felt* in its approach§. In truth, there ſeems to be ſomewhat preternatural in this inward conflict which our Lord Jeſus endured, ſomewhat analogous to that reſtleſſneſs, that depreſſion of the animal ſpirits, that diſturbance of the powers of recollection, &c, which people often feel in ſuch caſes as we are this day led to conſider, in the Houſe of Mourning.

And ſhall we ſuppoſe a perſon is no Member of that ſacred Body of which Jeſus is the Head, becauſe his ſorrows are like thoſe of his Lord and Maſter?—not only outward but inward; Not tranſitory, and paſſing away as death approaches, but continuing to the laſt gaſp? *The ſervant is not above his Lord*, as it is ſaid, Matt. x. 24, 25, *nor the Diſciple above his Maſter: it is enough for the Diſciple that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord.*

Things then *happen alike to All*: The *operations of Melancholy*, whether it ariſes from weakneſs of conſtitution, from adventitious diſeaſe, or from the influence of afflicting ſpirits under the direction of an all-wiſe and gracious God, take place in the Good as well as the Bad; and the caſe of our Lord exhibits to view one *extremely near and dear to God*, ſtruggling with inward ſorrows, as well as outward violence. Conſequently, ſuch as are under the diſturbance of Melancholy have no juſt cauſe to ſay, on that account merely, they are *forſaken of God*, that they have *no ſhare in the gracious workings of his holy Spirit*, but are marked out for *future vengeance*. The Recollections under this head are of a very calming nature, but their energy to quiet the ſoul will be greatly *augmented*, if we go on to conſider,

IV. The holy and gracious Ends and Views of God, in ſuch diſpenſations of his Providence to Good People, and which ſo often appear not only unaccountable to the ſoul ſo diſtreſſed, but to thoſe about it too.

And though we cannot pretend to fathom the Depths of the Counſels of him, who is deſcribed as covering himſelf

 with

§ 2 Tim. i. 12. ch. iv. 6, 7, 8, and 17, 18.

with Clouds and Darkneſs†, we are not abſolutely incapable of aſſigning *probable* reaſons for the divine Procedure, and ſuch as may be greatly relieving.

Firſt, Such events may be deſigned the more firmly to eſtabliſh *the doctrine of a Future State* in the minds of men, and to give it more Energy and Life there.

When we ſee ſo little diſtinction made between the Virtuous and the Impious in this life—when we ſee the Wicked oftentimes paſſing through life with *great proſperity*, and dying in *tranquillity*, or, in the language of the prophet *Aſaph**, feeling no galling bands of painful illneſs preceding their deaths, but their ſtrength being firm, they paſs from health to death almoſt without feeling the tranſition; when we obſerve, on the contrary, the *many Afflictions of the Righteous*, and among the reſt an overwhelming Melancholy, whether conſtitutional or adventitious, and this continuing unto death: how ſtrong is the argument, derivable from theſe occurrences, that there ſhall be another State, which ſhall ſet to rights the irregularities of this, and give to All, thoſe diſtributions of Conſolation or Sorrow which ſuit their *moral character!*—Yes, theſe events give a lively Conviction of the truth of an Unſeen World, and convey the thought with great Energy to the heart: and how important is ſuch a firm and lively conviction!

Secondly, They ſerve to bring *Survivors to greater Submiſſion to the divine Will*, when he calls us to part with near and deſirable Relations.

How painful, how extremely painful is the breaking the dear connexions of this life, to thoſe of a *more impreſſible* temper, when having ſpent almoſt fifty years together, in the moſt intimate ſociety, Death comes and breaks the intercourſe! Nor can Children, more eſpecially thoſe that can claim no kindred with marble ſtatues, be untouched when they loſe a Parent: Filial Sorrow, however ſoft, is powerful, is united with great bitterneſs, and an heavineſs of heart that cannot well be deſcribed, eſpecially

† Pſ. xcvii. 2. * Pſ. lxxiii. 4.

especially in the earlier and more unconnected parts of life, as to some other relations, and where lucrative considerations are out of the question. It is our duty however, we all know, to submit unreservedly to the divine Will: all our comforts were derived from God; are to be considered as only lent, to be resumed again at pleasure: *the Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, and we should bless a taking as well as a giving God* ‡; but how difficult is it, if not to adopt the language, to adopt the real *Stillness and Resignation* of holy *Job*, in such times of Trial!

A Compassionate God, who perfectly knows the human frame, and consequently the difficulty in parting with near relations which Affection creates, frequently causes *weaning* providences to precede the rupture of those connexions: He, perhaps, so *embitters life to them*, and makes us see such severe struggles in them with anxiety and gloom, that our souls much more easily acquiesce in the divine Will, and we are brought to bless the merciful hand that releases from sorrow and distress, however *galling* the separation may be on our part.

Thirdly, Such Occurrences tend to shew, how much Mercy there is in being able to *taste the Comforts of Life*: a thought, which, perhaps, we do not attend to so much as we ought.

It is assuredly a mercy, devoutly to be acknowledged, when God gives to us the agreeablenesses of this world, *to us who are not worthy of the least of All his Mercies* §. This we All are ready to own; but we are too ready to forget, that it is a mercy too, a very great mercy, to be able *to enjoy* what the bounty of God gives us, and to relish the gifts of his Providence. Yet it is *certain* that it is as much owing to the Goodness of God, that we can taste, and relish the Agreeablenesses of life, as that we are possessed of them: "There is an Evil which I have seen "under the sun; and it is *common* among men: A man "to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth, and Ho-

 nour,

‡ Job i. 21. § Gen. xxxii. 10.

"nour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of All "that he deſireth, yet God *giveth him not power* to eat "thereof." Eccl. vi. 1, 2.

This is ſeen in all its Energy and Bitterneſs, when perſons are labouring under a melancholy, diſturbed Imagination. They can reliſh nothing. The *Sight of the Neareſt Relations* gives no pleaſure; on the contrary it creates pain: *devout Reading*, which formerly gave great delight; now cannot be borne: and the *Viſits of Children from a diſtance*, which were wont to excite exquiſite Joy; are now quickly interrupted with a deſire that they would withdraw. What a painful State of Mind!—Doth not ſuch a ſituation, however, teach us what, perhaps, we have not attended to *as we ought*, that we owe to God, not only the outward privileges we enjoy, but the *power of enjoying* them too? for pleaſing as the muſical modulations of the human voice are in themſelves, to them that are overwhelmed with Anguiſh of Soul, they not only give no delight; they become painful, according to *Solomon*, who ſo ſagaciouſly made his obſervations on human life: "As he that taketh away a Garment in Cold Weather— "ſo is he that ſingeth ſongs to an heavy heart †."

Laſtly, How do theſe Sorrows teach us, *not to put off the work of Religion* to the days of Diſorder and Affliction.

It would be wrong, abſolutely wrong, were that ever ſo proper a ſeaſon for the tranſactions of Religion, ſince we know not whether we ſhall have any *forewarnings* of our approaching Diſſolution. An *Apoplectic Fit* may carry us off in a few moments, or an *Accident* transfer us inſtantaneouſly out of Time into Eternity, and ſhall we diſmiſs to the hours of Sickneſs, *which may never arrive*, a work that is abſolutely neceſſary to be done?

But ſhould it be otherwiſe, what is the Leiſure or the Calmneſs of times of Sickneſs, for the effecting thoſe Exerciſes of Religion that are eſſentially neceſſary? Conſult thoſe that are ill, and they will tell you, that the extreme

† Prov. xxv. 20.

extreme Weakneſs or Reſtleſſneſs which they find; that the ſevere pain of Body they endure; that the diſturbance of the Powers of the Mind they feel; totally diſqualifies them for every thing of that ſort. *Bodily* Weakneſs and Diſtreſs greatly render us unfit, but *Mental* Diſorders—the diſarrangement of the powers of the *Soul*, much more ſo. "Whatſoever," then, "thy hand "findeth to do, do it with thy *Might*: for there is no "Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wiſdom, "in the Grave whither thou goeſt‖." Attend now, this moment, *to the one thing needful* *, leſt a *Sudden Death*, leſt the *Delirium* of a Fever, or the *Oppreſſion of Melancholy* ſeize thee, and render thee unfit for directing thy outward Concerns, and much more the affairs of thy Soul.

Solomon, in the ixth of *Eccleſiaſtes*, ſpeaks of it as one of the Evils under the Sun§, that things ſhould come alike, to the Righteous and to the Wicked, and one Event happen to All: but this is to be underſtood as ſignifying only an Evil in *human Eſtimation*; or at leaſt as rendered an Evil, by the *Perverſeneſs* of men; for you have ſeen, juſt reaſons may be aſſigned why God ſhould order matters ſo, and they are of a very quieting, ſatisfying kind. But beſides theſe *general* conſiderations, there are oftentimes *particular* circumſtances of a mollifying nature; and which ſhould, indeed, awaken our Gratitude. There were in the caſe of her whom we are this day mourning.

One is, that when the Reaſoning Powers are diſturbed, oftentimes the *language of the lips is profane*. The name of God, in ſuch caſes, is not unfrequently uſed in a manner that gives exquiſite pain to thoſe about the diſordered, and Good men have often, in hours of *Delirium*, aſſumed the terms uſed by thoſe that curſe and ſwear. And though theſe things will not be imputed to them, by the Equitable Judge of the world, as they are not Moral Agents

‖ Eccles. ix. 10. * Luke x. 39—42. § ver. 3.

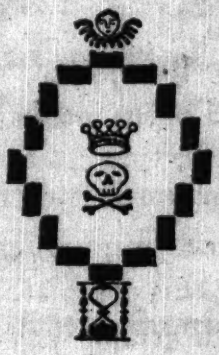
Agents when thus diſturbed in their reaſon, yet they are extremely painful to thoſe about them, and ſometimes occaſion a good deal of Reproach among the Unthinking; but nothing of this ſort, I apprehend, ever diſtreſſed You, my mourning Friends, in thoſe months of Woe through which you have been cauſed to paſs: and it is a *Mitigation* of your Sorrows which ought devoutly to be acknowledged.

Another thing is, that though the Diſorder continued unto Death, there was a *lucid Interval* ſome weeks ago, of ſeveral hours continuance, the remembrance of which muſt give you pleaſure. Then the language of Devotion returned to her lips, and ſhe expreſſed a pleaſing hope of joining hereafter in Religious Exerciſes; ſhe expreſſed too, great pleaſure in ſeeing her Friends and Relations about her, and converſing with them, whoſe Abſence before ſhe earneſtly deſired. It was underſtood to be what is uſually called a *lightening* before death, and it was ſuppoſed by numbers, her departure was juſt at hand. They were rather miſtaken, for relapſing, ſhe continued *ſome weeks* longer. This pleaſing Interval ought however, though her diſorder returned, to be conſidered as an Indulgence of the God of Heaven to you. It is to be underſtood as the Recovery, in a great meaſure, of her Reaſon, *for a few hours*, in order to take her leave of you with devotion, and to ſhow what was the fixed temper of her Soul, which had been much concealed before by the diſorder. Her Affection to the Companion of her life then appeared, but Oh! her Children! her Children! of whom ſeveral were abſent then, and had not the pleaſure of ſeeing this conſolatory Alteration. Had ſhe been indulged with ſeeing you about her, what joy would it have given her to have been able to take her leave of you *All*, as bearing the Image of Chriſt, and being Heirs with her of Future Glory! She had the pleaſure of ſeeing many of you make a Solemn Profeſſion of Religion:

Religion: May you be *confirmed to the End! may you look to yourſelves, that you loſe not thoſe things you have wrought, but may receive a full Reward! and holding faſt that you have, may receive the Crown of Life* * *!*—If ſhe had not the ſame lively Conſolation as to others, may her Wiſhes, her Prayers, her Tears, iſſue in your Salvation! and with the Raptures of devout *Surprize*, and unſpeakable Joy, may ſhe meet you *All* in Chriſt's Heavenly Kingdom!

* 1 Cor. i. 8. 2 Ep. of St. John, v. 8. Rev. iii. 11.

End of the Sermon.



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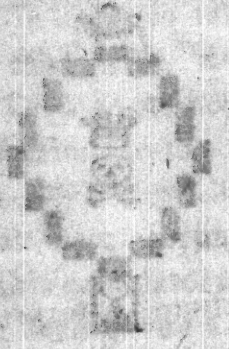

A FARTHER ADDRESS TO THE FAMILY, IN A SUPPLEMENTAL LETTER.

To DENNY CRABB, *of* Kesgrave, *in the County of* Suffolk, *Gentleman, and the rest of the Children of the Deceased*;

To Master ZECHARIAH CRABB, *of* Palgrave, *in the same County, and the rest of the Grandchildren*;

And To Mr. HENRY ROBINSON, *of* Bury St. Edmund's, *and the rest of her Sons and Daughters-in-Law.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I WAS extremely surprized at the first intimation, given me by one of your number, of a design to ask me to publish the preceding Sermon. I had never ventured to print any one of the many I had preached, in the course of the forty-five years of my Ministry in this Town, many of them

of the Funeral Kind, and I did not expect to begin now. The intimation however was juſt: for your ſurviving Parent ſoon applied to me, in the name of your family in general, to give you an opportunity of reading what had been pronounced in your hearing on this mournful occaſion.

I could not withſtand the Solicitations of one with whom I have had ſuch long *Connexions of Friendſhip*, eſpecially as it appeared, that *nothing more* was intended, than a *few Copies* for the uſe of a large Family†, and its numerous Friends: to which I thought might be added, the *Nature of the Subject*—rather *Uncommon*; and the *Hope* your Parent would fain entertain, that the reading theſe things may be long uſeful to you, when his Lips ſhall be cloſed in Silence, and he be no longer able to admoniſh and exhort you, to point out to you the *lovely Examples of thoſe that have gone before, through Faith and Patience now inheriting the Promiſes*, and to *comfort* you with the many Conſolations that are propoſed to the Servants of Jeſus in his holy Word, and which it muſt be expected you will want, as well as others, in making your way to God, through this world of Difficulties and Tears: in all which I earneſtly wiſh, and pray, that the hope of your aged Father and Grandfather may not be diſappointed.

It is not to be expected that Strangers to your Family, or indeed any that had not an intimate Knowledge of what paſſed in the laſt months of Mrs. *Crabb's* Life, will read this diſcourſe with the ſame Emotions with which you heard it, and which it is not improbable you may feel renewed upon your examining it in your Retirements. Beſides the peculiar effects of *Natural Affection*, and the extreme Senſibility and Tenderneſs the Soul is wont to feel

† She was followed to the Grave by a long Proceſſion of Ten Children, (including thoſe that were ſo by marriage,) and Eleven Grandchildren, out of Seventeen which ſhe left behind her.

feel in *times of Mourning*, there are *many*, there are *continual* references to Words that dropped from the Deceaſed, and to Circumſtances, which they can know nothing of, nor ſee any thing particular in, but which may touch you with *great Energy*: I hope they will not be the mere flowings of the Tears of Nature, but will be the Emotions of a *ſanctified* heart, or at leaſt the workings of the Soul melting under the influence of renewing Grace, and *now* determining, in dependence on a divine power, henceforth not to live to yourſelves, but unto God.

It was by no means neceſſary *minutely* to draw the Character of the Deceaſed, in a Sermon addreſſed to a very large and mixed Aſſembly: very general hints are all I chooſe, on ſuch occaſions, to venture upon, and you are ſenſible it is a Rule from which I do not depart. Large Eulogies are very nice and delicate things: it is infinitely better, I apprehend, to leave it to thoſe that hear, ſilently to trace the characters of the Departed, in their own breaſts, according to their own obſervations, and, in conſequence, with Conviction of heart. I would leave it in particular to you her Children to do it: You know *what ſhe was*. Suffer me only to remind you—that if great Pity and Beneficence to the Poor; if a Conſtant Attendance on the Solemnities of Divine Worſhip; if an Attention to the great requirements of Practical Religion, without ſuffering the violence of diſputes in the profeſſing world about doctrinal matters to interrupt that attention, be *Virtues*, Think on what you have ſeen, and be followers of ſuch as have been followers of the precepts of the Goſpel. If All this, united with great freedom, from the earlieſt days of life, from the blemiſhes of a diſſolute age, did not prevent her from adopting that ſacred humiliation of the Soul before God, in which the Spirit of the Goſpel ſo much conſiſts: pitying with great Tenderneſs thoſe that had ſtrayed from the Paths of Integrity and Virtue; entertaining a very low apprehenſion of her own Talents and Virtues; diſclaiming all

pretence to Self-Righteouſneſs in the preſence of God§; adopting with great Emotion the words of St. *Paul*, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what "haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? now if thou "didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not "received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7; and covering every thing that could with any propriety be concealed, with Secreſy and Retirement: (I aſſert nothing: I only would direct you to your own Recollections:) Do you too labour to be *ſincerely* Religious; in the moſt *unaffected* manner ſerve your generation according to the will of God; and cover with a Veil of *deep Modeſty* whatever may be properly covered; at the *ſame time* that you make it appear you are not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

Suffer me to remind you of one thing more. A conſiderable part of the Younger Years of her Life was ſpent from home, under the care of one whoſe inſtructions, it may be, were by no means diſadvantageous in a worldly view, but where ſhe imbibed ſtrong Prejudices againſt that denomination of Chriſtians to which her Parents belonged, and among whom ſhe afterwards herſelf choſe to worſhip, and whom ſhe valued with diſtinguiſhed Affection, as conducting things more agreeably to the Simplicity of the New Teſtament, and in a manner more detached from thoſe worldly Arrangements that do not well ſuit the Heavenly Religion of the Lord Jeſus. The Recollection of theſe former Prejudices, I believe, gave

§ As anſwering, ſhe meant, the full demands of the *Law* of God, or being any thing like that *perfection* of Obedience the *Law* requires in order to our being juſtified by it. So an eminent *Swediſh Nobleman*, when calling to witneſs his *Royal Pupil* concerning the care he had taken in his Education, ſaid, "I appeal "not to the *Tribunal of God's Juſtice*, for I am *but a Man*; but "I appeal to the *Seat of his Mercy*:" or ſomething of that ſort. For there, he knew, a creature conſcious of imperfection, as the moſt uptight men are, but ſincerely endeavouring to do the will of God, might hope to ſtand with comfort, and to be accepted, through Jeſus, Eph. i. 6, 7.

gave her conſiderable Pain, and ſhould teach you her Children, not only ſteadily to adhere to what *you apprehend* to be the way of Chriſt yourſelves, and to be the Cauſe of Sacred Liberty; but to ſtrive to regulate matters ſo, if poſſible, as to prevent your Children's being early impreſſed with diſagreeable prejudices againſt them. I do not mean that you ſhould ſtrive to imbitter their minds againſt thoſe Chriſtians that differ in their Religious Opinions, or their Modes of Worſhip and Diſcipline, from thoſe you have adopted; no! Teach them to love All Good People every where, and of every Denomination. But Truth and Error are not of *Equal Value:* nor are—The maintaining the Liberty with which Chriſt hath made us free—the upholding the adminiſtrations of the Churches of Chriſt, both as to *Worſhip and Diſcipline*, in the purity and ſimplicity of the Apoſtolic Age, or as near to that purity and ſimplicity as may be—and the manner of *introducing the Young from time to time into the Miniſtry*, ſo as may give no juſt cauſe to ſuſpect, that *they are taking the Overſight of the Flock of God for filthy Lucre, rather than of a Ready Mind* *, (by *educating* thoſe only for the Miniſtry that appear to be Religious, and not influenced by worldly Views; and *fixing* them in the Miniſtry in conſequence of Popular Elections, but ſuch as are ſolemn, unintriguing, and truly under the direction of zeal for the Honour of God and the Good of Souls, according to the Rules of the Primitive Church,) Things of ſo little conſequence, as that we may very well be totally unconcerned about them. A *Spirit of Indifference* about theſe matters is, I own, grown very common, and eſteemed, it may be, very polite; the Deceaſed thought otherwiſe: it muſt be left with you to determine, Which is moſt conformable to the Teachings of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and which will be moſt approved at his Judgment Seat.

Several of you have conſiderable portions of the Riſing Generation committed to your *educating* care, Remember—you are to give an account of your reſpective Charges to

* 1 Pet. v. 2.

to God: May the Spirit of Wiſdom, and of Tenderneſs mingled with Fortitude, guide you! May Love to the Truth as it is in Jeſus, united with true Candor and genuine Charity to thoſe that differ from you in religious matters, direct your ſteps!

As to You, the *Grand-children*, ſeveral of you cannot be ſuppoſed capable of entering far into the matters of Religion at preſent, but ſome of you *may*. It was a diſappointment to ſome of you, at leaſt to ſome of your Parents, that nothing was ſaid *diſtinguiſhingly* to you in the Sermon: give me leave to ſupply that omiſſion here.

Let the words of a *royal* Teacher, and the *wiſeſt* of mere Men, make a deep impreſſion on your minds: *The Duſt ſhall return to the Earth as it was; and the Spirit ſhall return unto God that gave it. Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity! Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth**. If you remember Him as you ought, you will remember your Service is his due; you will remember, that as goodneſs appears diffuſed through his viſible works, his precepts relating to Religion cannot be grievous‡; you will remember, it muſt be dreadful to offend ſuch a mighty Being; moſt honourable, to do his Will; that as it is *His appointment that All men ſhould once die, and after that the Judgment*§, the Solemnities of Death will moſt certainly come upon you, perhaps while you are yet Children. Very little diſtant from the Grave of your Grandmother lie Children nearly related to you, and it may be the intention of God that *you* too ſhall die in early life. Are you prepared for the Judgment that muſt follow? Diverſions may be pleaſing for a few moments: they are not forbidden you, by the Parents of your Fleſh, nor by God the great Father of your Spirits: but are theſe, think you, the Whole, the Principal End for which you were raiſed up into being? Vanity of Vanities, all theſe certainly are Vanity. There is ſomething in your Souls that

* Eccleſ. xii. 7, 8, and 1. ‡ 1 John v. 3. § Heb. ix. 27.

that demonſtrate you are made for more *noble purpoſes*: Solemnly and Often think—What.

But I would hope ſome of you *have thought*, have *learnt* what thoſe purpoſes are, have felt anſwerable workings of heart, have been brought to correſpondent Religious Tranſactions—your Eyes ſuffuſed with Tears on the account of your Sins, your Knees bent before God in Prayer for Forgiveneſs, your Souls melting under the hopes of Pardon through the dying of the Lord Jeſus for the Sins of men, conſecrating yourſelves to be the Lord's, and your attention after directed to the book of God, that you may learn from thence *how you ought to walk*, and *to pleaſe God* †. Prayers, I know, you have been taught to repeat, and you are called upon from time to time to read: but do you pray *from the heart?* and do you read as a Taſk, in conſequence of Cuſtom, or do you read from *a deſire to obey the Will of God?*

As to thoſe of you that are *too young* to be at preſent much engaged in matters of this ſort, let the conſiderations I have been propoſing to the reſt be attended to with care by you, as you ſeverally feel your Underſtandings opening, and that you are capable of comprehending matters of this kind, and let them be looked upon by you as ſpoken then to You immediately, and reſerved to that time when you ſhall find yourſelves capable of hearing:—and *May God then make your hearts to burn within you*, upon the reading this Letter *directed* to you, when that hand that is now writing may be *cold in the grave!*

Let none of you give way to the thought, that the religious Emotions of the heart of a *Child* will not be the object of the divine Attention. He *humbles* himſelf indeed when he takes notice of the Adorations of *Archangels* and *Seraphs*, but he neglects not the homage that mortal Men pay him, he deſpiſes not the day of ſmall things, nor the feeble efforts of Childhood. Jeſus, *who always did the things that were pleaſing to the Father**, took CHILDREN into

† 1 Theſſ. iv. 1. * John viii. 29.

into his arms in the days of his abode on earth, and *solemnly blessed them*, or prayed that God would bestow his Blessings upon them, and *was displeased when his disciples opposed their being brought, much displeased*, saying, *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God**.

Two families of you are *motherless* Children, and the anxious heart of your Grandmother was particularly pained about some of you: but if God be your God, if you sincerely devote yourselves to him, he will be your guide through life, and make your death happy. The prophet *Isaiah* declares, in the most emphatic terms, that the Tenderness of God towards his People far exceeds *a Mother's affectionate care*†.

With the sincerest Wishes for the present and everlasting Welfare of you all, I am,

Your most affectionate, faithful, humble Servant,

THOMAS HARMER.

WATESFIELD,
near Bury St. Edmunds, *Suffolk*,
August 2d, 1779.

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* Mark x. 13—16. † Is. xlix. 15.

ERRATA.

Page 6, line 13, *for* intimation *read* intimations.
—— 13, line 4, *note*, *for* 16. *put* 16,
—— 14, line 22, *for* God, *read* God.
—— 16, In some Copies, the Direction Word should be *and* instead of *there*.